

Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP)

Background

Currently, more than 20 percent of the offenders in Washington prisons are serving time for serious sexual crimes, making their management and treatment a major interest for the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the community.

DOC and its partners have a comprehensive system consisting of sentencing alternatives, confinement, treatment, supervision, notification and civil commitment all of whose ultimate goal is public safety.

The Department operates prison treatment programs for male and female offenders at three prisons, and it follows up with sex offender aftercare in the community after offenders have completed their prison time and while on supervision. Sex offenders about to leave prison undergo a classification process to recommend the level of public notification. DOC and its partners ensure the proper authorities, organizations and potential victims are informed about the whereabouts of sex offenders leaving prison and impose special safeguards on those offenders thought to pose a higher risk to the public.

The SOTP is part of a comprehensive management system for sex offenders in prison and while they are under supervision. Sexual deviancy treatment improves the safety of the public, and in doing so actually saves taxpayers money. Some offenders who complete the program no longer commit sex crimes, but for others it may be determined that treatment was not successful, and they may continue their confinement in some cases (Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board) as well as possibly continued confinement through civil commitment process for sexually violent predators in the Special Commitment Center on McNeil Island, which is operated by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).



Governing Laws

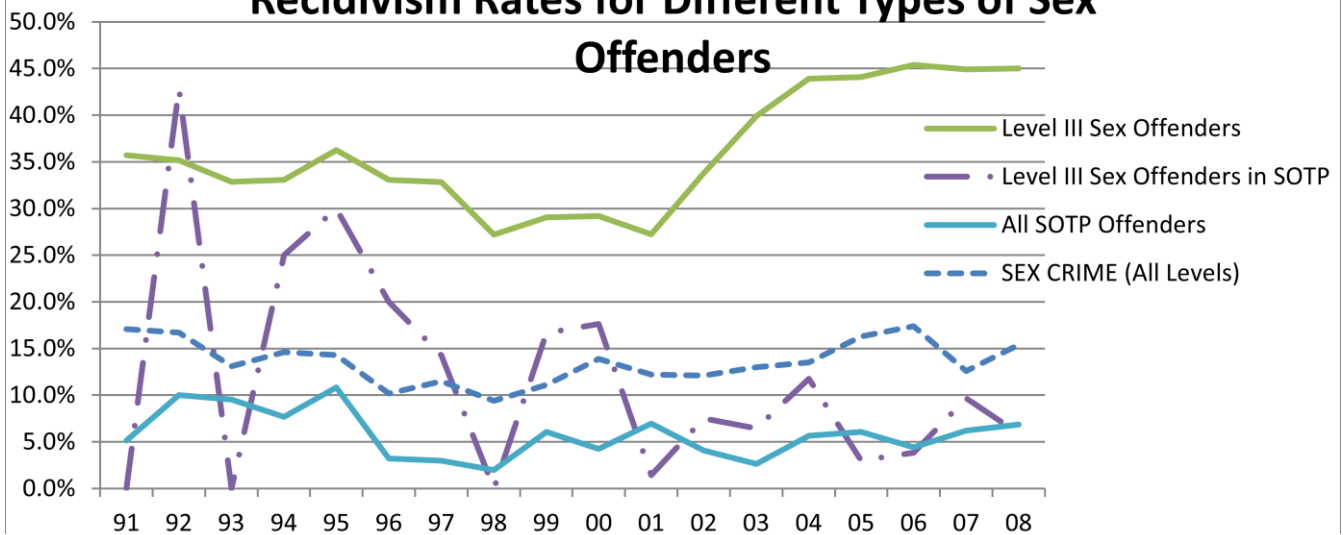
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=9.94A.810>

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=9.94A.820>

For more information

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Recidivism Rates for Different Types of Sex Offenders



Level III sex offenders who completed SOTP have substantially lower recidivism rates compared to other Level III sex offenders, 38 of the 371 SOTP offenders (10.2%) have reoffended and returned to prison within 3 years since their release.

Facts

Prison: On March 31, 2012, 17,070 offenders were incarcerated in prisons or work releases.

21.4% of these offenders committed sex offenses and were serving time in DOC facilities.

325 offenders were actively participating in SOTP in prison.

Community Supervision: 15,772 offenders were on active supervision in the Washington communities on March 31, 2012.

19.0% of these offenders were being supervised for a sex offense.

732 offenders on active community supervision were sentenced under the Special Sex Offender Sentencing Alternative (SSOSA) by the courts.

211 offenders were actively participating in community based SOTP as part of their supervision.

Previous Research

Early studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s were unable to detect differences in recidivism rates between sex offenders who underwent treatment and those who had not. Since that time, research indicates treatment is found to decrease sex offense recidivism. Statistically significant large studies have found that contemporary cognitive behavioral treatment, such as the methods used in the SOTP, does help to reduce rates of sexual reoffending by as much as 40 percent.

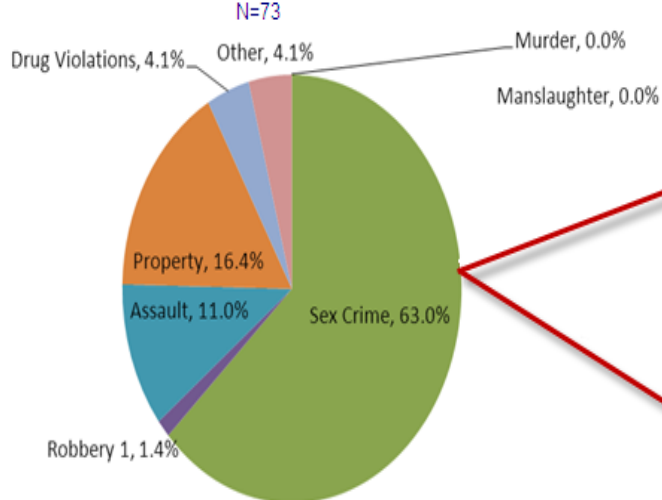
A study conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy in April 2009 reviewed the costs and benefits of treatment and found that treatment saves more money than it costs. The preliminary results from the economic analysis of prison treatment with aftercare estimated that for each taxpayer dollar spent on an offender returns were \$4,064 in victim and taxpayers benefits and reduced crime by 10 percent.

Outcomes: Recidivism

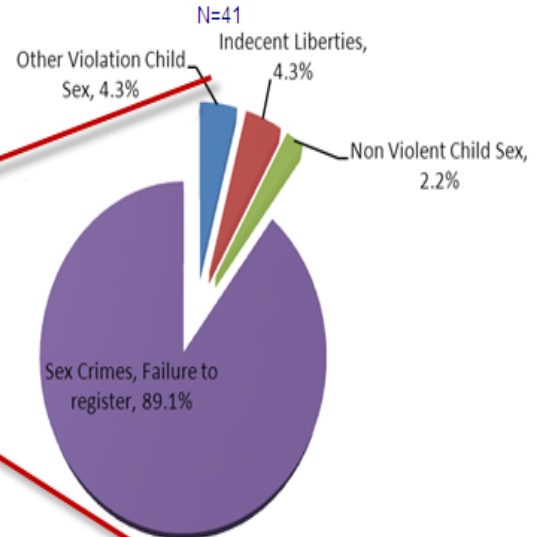
As of March 31, 2012, 2,716 offenders had completed SOTP since its inception in 1988. Of those offenders who completed the program, 2,353 have not reoffended and returned to prison. Or to put it another way, this is a 13 percent recidivism rate.

- 363 offenders are serving time in prison for a new conviction after recidivating.
- 211 offenders are currently on community supervision. All sex offenders are required to have community supervision.

Recidivism Offense for Former Sex Crime Offenders Released in 2007



Type of Sex Crime for Reoffenders



Of those Sex Crime Offenders who were released in 2007 and committed new crimes, 63 percent committed a new sex crime within three years of release. Of those, the new crime for 89 percent of those was failing to register as a sex offender.

Facts

Prison SOTP:

Average Age - 46

Gender

Male - 95.3%

Female - 4.7%

Race

White - 81.3%

Black - 7.2%

Hispanic - 6.8%

American Indian - 2.1%

Asian - 2.1%

Other - 0.4%

- Level III sex offenders in SOTP have substantially lower recidivism rates compared to all Level III sex offenders, 38 of the 371 Level III offenders (10.2%) have reoffended and returned to prison since their release.

The 13 percent recidivism rate for all SOTP completers looks promising especially when compared to all other offenders in Washington who, historically, return back to prison (recidivate) at rates between 28 and 29 percent within their first three years of release from prison. This lower trend holds up using five year recidivism rates too.

However, this encouraging outcome may be a result of the types of offenders who participated in SOTP, which is a voluntary program. Although this outcome is good news, a research control group is needed to more accurately draw conclusions from this recidivism rate. A future more definitive study of recidivism for SOTP is planned.

Outcomes: Recidivism and Re-offense Type

There is perception that the vast majority of sex offenders will repeat their crimes; however, recidivism rates differ depending on the nature of the offense based on numerous studies.

- Offenders who choose victims from within the family have re-offense rates that range from 4-10%.

Facts

Community Supervision SOTP:

Average Age - 43.7

Gender - 98.5% Male 1.5% Female

Race - 83.5% White, 6.4% Black,
5.8% Hispanic, 2.2% American
Indian, 1.3% Asian, 0.7% Other

2,716 offenders have completed
SOTP

▪ Level I Sex Offender.....	863
▪ Level II Sex Offender.....	548
▪ Level III Sex Offender.....	491
▪ Unclassified	1,010
▪ Dead ¹	14
▪ Special Commitment Center ..	112

¹Offenders who were deceased
after completion of the program

Length of time on supervision²

▪ 6 months or less	160
▪ 1 year	132
▪ 2 years	192
▪ 3 years	113
▪ 4 years	31
▪ 5 or more years	57

²Length of time on supervision is
defined as the difference between
the supervision start date and
closure date.

- Rapists (those offenders assaulting adults) have re-offense rates that range from 7-35%.
- Exhibitionists have re-offense rates that range from 41-71%.

It is essential to recognize that official recidivism statistics are always lower than actual re-offense rates because some sex offenders commit many sex offenses that go unreported and undetected.

Of those sex crime offenders who were released in 2007, 63 percent committed a new sex crime within three years of release. It is important to note that the new crime for 89 percent of those re-offenders was for failing to register as a sex offender, and not a more serious sex crime.

Community Supervision

All offenders who participated in the SOTP while in prison are provided continued treatment (aftercare) while being supervised in the community.

Sex offender treatment is only one component of an effective strategy to manage risk and protect the community from sex offenders. Monitoring and support by DOC community corrections staff, the offender's support system, and the entire community play a vital role. DOC requires all Level III sex offenders to wear GPS locators for their initial transition time in the community (first 30 days after release from prison.) In late 2008, DOC expanded its use of these locators. We have found that the first 30 days is the period of time when an offender is mostly likely to violate his or her conditions of supervision.

Effective community supervision of sex offenders improves community safety and reduces recidivism. Supervision can reduce recidivism when we both monitor behavior and address factors related to sex offender recidivism.

